

brought her there, and that she could only be delivered, according to the forms of the shastrū, after suffering the punishment due to her. Vijūyū became impatient and clamorous; till Yūmū told her, that if she could get the merit of the Boodhastūmēē vrūtū transferred to her by some one, she might deliver her mother. Yūmū further informed her, that on earth a certain queen, who had performed the Boodhashtūmēē vrūtū, had been three days in the pains of child-birth; and that, if she would perform a certain ceremony, which he described to her, the queen would be delivered, and would in return transfer the merits of this vrūtū to her mother, who would immediately be delivered from torments. Vijūyū took this advice, and thus procured the deliverance of her mother from hell.

Yūmū's principal names are: Dhūrmū-rajū, or, the holy king.—Pitripūtee, the lord of the ancients.—Sūmūvurttee, he who judges impartially.—Prētū-rat, the lord of the dead.—Kritantū, the destroyer.—Yūmoona-bhrata, the brother of Yūmoona^a.—Shūmūnū, he who levels all.—Yūmū-rat, the chief of the fourteen Yūmūs^b.—Yūmū, he who takes out of the world.—Kalū, time.—Dūndudhūrū, he who holds the rod of punishment.—Shraddhū-dévū, the god of the ceremonies paid to deceased ancestors; or, he who eats his share of the shraddhū.—Voivūswūtū, the son of Vivūswūt, or Sōōryū.—Ūntūkū, he who kills, or puts an end to life.

^a The river Yūmoona.

^b Yūmū has thirteen assistants, whose names are here given as different names of this judge of the dead.

SECT. XII.—*The Worship of the "Host of Heaven."*

THE Hindoos, like other idolatrous nations, have gone into the worship of the heavenly bodies. The planets, the constellations, the signs of the zodiac, the stars in general, the star Canopus^c, the star Kalū-poorooshū, &c. have all been deified, and are worshipped with appropriate forms of petition, praise, &c. some of them at the festivals of other gods, and others at different times. The constellations are worshipped separately at the births of children, as well as at the anniversaries of these births till the time of death.

Some persons suppose, that the worship of the elements was the primitive idolatry of the Hindoos, and that of heroes the invention of later times. It is plain, however, that the védūs, supposed to be the most ancient of the Hindoo writings, countenance the worship of deified heroes. These books contain accounts of Brūmha, Vishnoo, and Shivū, and most of the other deities. A paragraph in the Rig-védū speaks of the gods choosing Indrū to be their king, whom they placed on a throne fancifully constructed with texts of the védū: (amongst all the gods none are charged with greater crimes than Indrū, who seduced the wife of his spiritual guide :) indeed from a variety of facts it is highly probable, that to the védūs we are to attribute the foundation of this whole fabric of superstition. These books contain prayers to procure the destruction of enemies, as well as encourage the burning of widows alive^d, which is

^c Called by the Hindoos Ugūstyū, the sage.

^d 'O fire, let these women, with bodies anointed with ghee, eyes (coloured) with stibium and void of tears, enter the parent of water, that they may not be separated from their husbands, may be in union with excellent husbands, be sinless, and be jewels among women.' *Rig-védū*.

surely a far greater crime than any thing done in the presence of the images of Ramū or Krishnū. The ancient idolatry, therefore, seems to have been as corrupt as any thing practised at present.—Is it not probable that the horrid worship of Moloch was really that of the element of fire?

I do not find, however, that the heavenly bodies are worshipped on the tops of houses, as appears to have been the case among those nations from whom the Jews learnt their idolatry. It is said of Manasseh, that ‘he worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them.’ Josiah, the son of Manasseh, put down all that burnt incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven. By the prophet Jeremiah God threatens, that the people shall bring out the bones of the king of Judah, of the princes, priests, prophets, and people; and adds, ‘And they shall spread them before the sun, the moon, and all the host of heaven, whom they have served; they shall not be gathered nor be buried; they shall be for dung upon the face of the earth.’ By the prophet Zephaniah, God threatens to cut off them ‘that worship the host of heaven upon the house-tops.’ Stephen, in rehearsing the history of the children of Israel before the Jewish council, declares, that God formerly gave up their forefathers to worship the host of heaven; and mentions among other objects of worship the star of the god Remphan.

This worship, which has been so general among heathen nations, seems to have originated in judicial astrology, and in the belief that the heavenly bodies have a great influence upon human events. Hindoos, whose birth under a supposed evil planet has been ascertained, are often filled with melancholy; some abandon themselves to despair,

careless of what becomes of an existence connected with such omens. The reader will perceive, in reading the account of Saturn, to what a degree the Hindoos dread the influence of this planet, especially at the time when it is in a certain sign. Against fears of this kind the prophet Jeremiah warned the Jews: 'Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven, for the heathen are dismayed at them.'

SECT. XIII.—*The Worship of the Nine Grühūs*, or Planets.*

At the great festivals a small offering is presented to all the planets at once; but except on these occasions they are never worshipped together. They are, however, frequently worshipped separately by the sick or unfortunate, who suppose themselves to be under the baneful influence of some planet. At these times the nine planets are worshipped, one after the other, in regular succession. The ceremonies consist of the common forms of worship before other images, and close with a burnt-offering to each planet.

To Sōōryū are offered in the burnt-sacrifice small pieces of the shrub ūrkū^f; to Chūndrū, those of the pūlashū^g; to Mars, those of the khūdirū^h; to Mercury, those of the ūp-amargūⁱ; to Jupiter, those of the ūshwūt't'hū^k; to Venus, those of the ooroombūrū; to Saturn, those of the shūmēē^l;

* These stars are called grühūs, because they make known to people good and evil.

^f *Asclepias gigantea*.

^g *Butea frondosa*.

^h *Mimosa catechu*.

ⁱ *Achyranthes aspera*.

to Rahoo, blades of dōrva grass; and to Kétoo, blades of kooshū grass.

In honour of Sōōryū boiled rice, mixed with molasses, is burnt; milk is to be mixed with the rice offered to Chūndrū; with that to Mars, curds; with that to Mercury, clarified butter: to Jupiter is offered frumenty; to Venus, boiled rice alone; to Saturn, various kinds of food; to Rahoo, goat's flesh or fish; to Kétoo, blood from the ear of a goat, mixed with rice.

The image of Sōōryū is to be a round piece of mixed metal, twelve fingers in diameter; that of Chūndrū is to be like a half moon, a cubit from end to end; that of Mars, a triangular piece of metal measured by the thickness of six fingers; that of Mercury, a golden bow measuring the thickness of two fingers from one extremity to the other; that of Jupiter, like a flower of the water-lily; that of Venus, a four-square piece of silver; that of Saturn, an iron scymitar; that of Rahoo, an iron mūkūrū; and that of Kétoo, an iron snake.

The fees accompanying the worship of the different planets are various: at that of Sōōryū, a milch cow; of Chūndrū, a shell; of Mars, a bull; of Mercury, a morsel of gold; of Jupiter, a piece of cloth; of Venus, a horse; of Saturn, a black cow; of Rahoo, a piece of iron; and of Kétoo, a goat.

When the officiating bramhūn performs the worship of separate planets, he must put on vestments of divers colours, and offer different kinds of flowers.

SECT. XIV.—*Rūvee^m, the Sun.*

THIS god, the son of Kūshyūpū, the sage, is painted red. He holds a water-lily in each hand, and rides in a chariot drawn by seven yellowⁿ horses.

Rūvee, as one of the planets, is worshipped only at the great festivals. The Jyotish-tūtwū says, that if a person be born under the planet Rūvee, he will possess an anxious mind, be subject to disease and other sufferings, be an exile, a prisoner, and endure much sorrow from the loss of his wife, children, and property.

This god has been already noticed under the name of Sōōryū: but in that account several particulars were omitted by mistake; and which I insert here, though they properly belong to another form of this idol.—While bathing, the Hindoos repeat certain incantations, in order to bring the waters of all the holy places in the heaven of this god into the spot where they are standing, and thus obtain the merit of bathing not only in Gūnga, but in all the sacred rivers, &c. in the heaven of Sōōryū. After bathing too the Hindoos make their obeisance to this god in a standing posture; the more devout draw up their joined hands to the forehead, gaze at the sun, make prostration to him, and then turn round seven times, repeating certain forms of petition and praise. On these occasions they hold up water in their joined hands, and then ‘pour out a drink-offering’ to the sun.

When the terrific being which sprung out of Shivū’s

^m Hence Rūvee-varū, or Sunday.

ⁿ Not green, as mentioned by Mr. Maurice.

bunch of hair went with all the bhōtās, &c. to destroy Dūkshū's sacrifice, all the gods being present, this monster seized on Sōryū and knocked out his teeth: in consequence, at the time of worship, only soft things, as flour, &c. are now offered to this god, such as a toothless old man might eat.

Sōryū is charged in the Mūhabharātū with ravishing Koontee, a virgin, from whence Kūrnū, a giant, was born.



SECT. XV.—*Somū°, or Chūndrū, the Moon.*

THE image of Somū is that of a white man, drawn by ten horses, or sitting on the water-lily. With his right hand he is giving a blessing, and in the other he holds a club.

In the work called Ūdhikūrūnū-mala, a sacrifice is ordered to be performed to Somū, and the worshipper is promised a place in the heaven of this god.

All the Hindoo ceremonies are regulated by the rising or setting, the waxing or waning of the moon. The Jyotish-tūtwū says, 'If a person be born under the planet Somū, he will have many friends; will possess elephants, horses, and palanqueens; be honourable and powerful; will live upon excellent food, rest on superb couches, &c.'

A race of Hindoo kings are said to have descended from Somū by Robinē°, and are called the children of the moon.

° Hence Somū-yarū, or Monday.

° The Hyades.

The first of these was Boodhū, and the forty-sixth Yoodhist'hirū.

This god on a certain occasion was forcibly carried away by Gūroorū, the bird on which Vishnoo rides, and delivered up to the giants. The giants, anxious to become immortal as well as the gods, promised Gūroorū that if he would bring the moon by force, so that they might drink the nectar supposed to exist in the bright parts of that planet, they would deliver his mother from the curse pronounced against her by her son Ūroonū, by which she had been doomed to become the slave of her sister. Gūroorū soon seized the god, and placed him trembling among the assembled giants; but while the latter were gone to bathe, and prepare for partaking of the waters of immortality, Indrū arrived and delivered the captive, and thus disappointed these implacable enemies of the gods.

Somū is charged with seducing the wife of Vrihūspūtee, his preceptor. See p. 93.

The chief names of this god are: Somū, or, he from whom the water of immortality springs.—Himangshoo, he whose beams are cooling.—Chūndrū, he at whose rising people rejoice.—Indoo, the great.—Koomoodū-bandūvū, the friend of the flower Koomoodū^a.—Vidhoo, he who causes the gods to drink the water of life.—Soodhangshoo, he whose rays are as the water of life.—Oshūdhēeshū, the lord of medicinal plants.—Nishapūtee, the lord of night.—Ūbjū, he who was born from the waters.—Joivatrikū, the preserver of men.—Glou, he who decreases.—Mrigrankū,

^a *Nymphaea lotus*. After the rising of the moon this flower is said by the Hindoos to expand.

he on whose lap sits a deer^r.—Kulanidhee, he with whom are the kūlas^s.—Dwijūrajū, the chief of the bramhūns.—Nūkshūtrēshū, the lord of the planets.—Kshūpakūrū, he who illumines the night.

SECT. XVI.—*Mūṅgūlū*^t, or *Mars*.

THIS god is painted red; rides on a sheep; wears a red necklace, and garments of the same colour; and has four arms: in one hand he holds a weapon called shūktee; with another he is giving a blessing; with another forbidding fear; and in the fourth he holds a club.

‘If a person be born under the planet Mūṅgūlū, he will be full of anxious thoughts, be wounded with offensive weapons, be imprisoned, be oppressed with fear from robbers, fire, &c. and will lose his lands, trees, and good name.’—*Jyotish-tūtwū*.

SECT. XVII.—*Boodhū*^u, or *Mercury*.

THIS god has four arms; in one hand he holds the discus, in another a club, in another a scymitar, and with the

^r See a story of the birth of Boodhū in the following page.

^s Kūla is the one 16th part of the disk of the moon, viz. that quantity which it increases or decreases in one day.

^t Mūṅgūlū-varū, or Tuesday. Mūṅgūlū is also called Ungarūkū, or, he who travels; Koojū, the son of the earth; and Lohitangū, the blood-coloured.

^u Boodhū-varū, or Wednesday. The meaning of Boodhū is, the wise.

fourth is bestowing a blessing. He rides on a lion; is of a placid countenance; and wears yellow garments.

The following is an account of the birth of Boodhū:—On a certain occasion Vrihūspūtee, the spiritual guide of the gods, made a great feast, to which he invited all the gods. Chūndrū was present among the rest; who, during the festival, fell in love with Tara, the wife of Vrihūspūtee. Not knowing how to accomplish his wishes, after his return home he invited Vrihūspūtee to a sacrifice, begging him to bring his wife with him. Vrihūspūtee and his wife proceeded to the palace of Chūndrū, but saw no preparations for the sacrifice. The former expressing his surprise at this circumstance, Chūndrū told him that the sacrifice was unavoidably delayed, and advised him to return for a short time to his devotions, leaving his wife at his house. Vrihūspūtee consented, and during his absence Chūndrū dishonoured the wife of his spiritual guide; who on his return, finding his wife pregnant, cursed Chūndrū, and hurled him into the sea, where he continued like a cinder, leaving the earth in darkness for two kūlpūs, or 864,000,000 years. Vrihūspūtee compelled his wife to deliver herself, and, on the birth of the child Boodhū, reduced her to ashes. Brūmha afterwards raised her from her ashes, and, thus purified, Vrihūspūtee took her to his embraces again. Sū-moodrū, (the sea,) incensed at his son for this horrid crime of dishonouring the wife of his divine teacher, disinherited him. Chūndrū then applied to his sister Lūkshmēē*, the wife of Vishnōo, by whose power part of his sin was re-

He is also called Rouhinéyū, the son of Rohinēē, and Soumyū, the son of Somū.

* Lūkshmēē was born, like Chūndrū, at the churning of the sea by the gods.

moved, and he became light like the moon when three days old. She also applied in his behalf to Parvūtē, who resolved to restore Chūndrū to heaven, and for this purpose planted him in the forehead of her husband[†]; who went, thus ornamented, to a feast of the gods. Vrihūspūtee, on seeing Chūndrū again in heaven, was greatly incensed, and could only be appeased by Brūmha's ordaining, that the lascivious god should be excluded from heaven, and placed among the stars; and that the sin by which his glory had been obscured should remain for ever. Chūndrū now asked Brūmha to remove the vomiting of blood, with which he had been seized since his fall from heaven; who directed him, as a certain cure, to hold a deer on his knees.

‘If a person be born under the planet Boodhū, he will be very fortunate, obtain an excellent wife, &c.’—*Jyotish-tūtū*.



SECT. XVIII.—*Vrihūspūtee*[‡], or *Jupiter*.

THE image of this god, the son of the sage Ūgira, is painted yellow. He sits on the water-lily; has four arms; in one hand he holds a roodrakshū bead-roll; in another an alms' dish; in another a club; and with the fourth he is bestowing a blessing.

Vrihūspūtee is preceptor and priest to the gods; in whose palaces he explains the védūs, and performs a number of religious ceremonies.

[†] In Shivū's forehead is placed a half moon.

[‡] Vrihūspūti-varū, or Thursday.

If a person be born under the planet Vrihūspūtee, he will be endowed with an amiable disposition; possess palaces, gardens, lands, and be rich in money, corn, &c.; obtaining the affections of all, his honours will increase; he will possess much religious merit; and, in short, will have all his wishes gratified. Kshūtriyūs, Voishyūs, and Shōō-drūs, if born under this planet, will be prosperous and happy; but bramhūns will not be so fortunate: the reason given is, that Vrihūspūtee is a bramhūn, and therefore does not wish to exalt those of his own cast.—*Jyotish-tūtwū*.

This god is charged in the Mūhabharūtū with deflowering the wife of his eldest brother Ootūt'hyū.

Names. Vrihūspūtee, or, preceptor to the gods.—Soo-racharyū, the priest of the gods.—Gishpūtee, the eloquent.—Gooroo, the preceptor.—Jēēvū, he who revives the gods^a.—Angirūsū, the son of Ūngira.—Vachūspūtee, the lord of words, viz. the eloquent,

SECT. XIX.—*Shookrū^b, or the Planet Venus.*

THIS god, the son of the sage Bhrigoo, is dressed in white; sits on the water-lily; has four hands: in one he holds a roodrakshū bead-roll; in another an alms' dish; in another a club; and with the other is bestowing a blessing.

Shookrū is preceptor and officiating priest to the giants. He is represented as blind of one eye; the reason of which

^a That is, when the gods die in battle, Vrihūspūtee by incantations restores them to life.

^b Shookrū-varū, or Friday.

is thus related :—When Vamūnū went to king Būlee, to solicit a present, Shookrū, being Būlee's preceptor, forbade his giving him any thing. The king disregarding his advice, the priest was obliged to read the necessary formulas, and to pour out the water from a vessel, to ratify the gift. Shookrū, still anxious to withhold the gift, which he foresaw would be the destruction of his master, entered the water in an invisible form, and by his magic power prevented it from falling; but Vamūnū, aware of the device, put a straw into the bason of water, which entered Shookrū's eye, and gave him so much pain, that he leaped out of the bason: the water then fell, and the gift was offered.

‘If a person be born under the planet Shookrū, he will have the faculty of knowing things past, present, and future; will have many wives; have a kingly umbrella, (the emblem of royalty;) and other kings will worship him; he will possess elephants, horses, palanqueens, footmen, &c.’—*Jyotish-tūtwū.*

Shookrū's daughter, Dēvūjanēē, was deeply in love with one of her father's pupils, Kūchū, the son of Vrihūspūtee. This youth had been sent by his father to learn from Shookrū an incantation for raising the dead. One day Dēvūjanēē sent Kūchū to bring some flowers to be used in worship^c from a forest belonging to the giants. Previously to this, Kūchū had been devoured several times by different giants; but Shookrū by the above incantation had restored him to life: when he tore open the bellies of these cannibals, and destroyed them. The giants now resolved to make Shookrū himself eat this boy; for which purpose they caught him in the forest, cut him into the smallest

^c Gathering flowers for the worship of the gods is often at present the employment of young persons.

pieces, boiled him up in spirits, and invited Shookrū to the entertainment. Kūchū not returning from the forest, Dévūjanēē wept much, and told her father that she would certainly kill herself^d if he did not bring back her lover. Shookrū at length, by the power of meditation, discovered that he had eaten this youth, so beloved by his daughter; and he knew not how to bring him back to life, without the attempt being fatal to himself. At last, however, while the boy continued in his belly, he restored him to life, and taught him the incantation for raising the dead; after which Kūchū, tearing open Shookru's belly, came forth, and immediately restored his teacher to life. Kūchū, having obtained the knowledge of revivifying the dead, took leave of his preceptor, and was about to return to his father Vrihūspūtee, when Dévūjanēē insisted upon his marrying her. Kūchū declined this honour, as she was the daughter of his preceptor; at which she was so incensed that she pronounced a curse upon him, by which he was doomed to reap no advantage from all his learning. In return Kūchū cursed Dévūjanēē, and doomed her to marry a kshūtriyyū; which curse after some time took effect, and she was married to king Yūjatee. After Dévūjanēē had borne two children, she discovered that the king maintained an illicit connection with a princess of the name of Sūmmisht'ha, by whom he had three sons. She appealed to her father Shookrū, who pronounced a curse on Yūjatee; when his hair immediately became grey, his teeth fell from his head, and he was seized with complete decrepitude. Yūjatee remonstrated with his father-in-law, and asked him who should live with his daughter, who was yet young, seeing that he had brought old age upon him. Shookrū replied,

^d The Hindoo children often resort to this threat to extort some favour from their parents.

that if he could persuade any one to take upon him this curse, he might still enjoy connubial felicity. Yūjatee returned home, and asked his eldest son by Dēvūjanēē to take this curse for a thousand years, and possess the kingdom; at the close of which time he should become young again, and continue in the kingdom: but this son, his brother, and the two eldest sons of Sūmmisht'ha refused the kingdom on these conditions; which so enraged the father, that he cursed them all. The youngest son, however, by Sūmmisht'ha accepted the conditions, and instantly became weak and decrepid; when the father assumed his former youth, and returned to the company of his wives.

Names. Shookrū, or, he who sorrows at the destruction of the giants.—Doityū-gooroo, preceptor to the giants.—Kavyū, the poet.—Ooshūna, the friend of the giants.—Bhargūvū, the descendant of Bhrigoo.

SECTION XX.—*Shūnee*^e, or *Saturn*.

THIS god is dressed in black; rides on a vulture^f; has four arms; in one he holds an arrow; in another a javelin;

^e Shūnee-varū, or Saturday. One of the names of Shūnee is Shūnoish-chūrū, viz. he who travels slowly.

^f This god is represented as sitting on this bird, probably, to denote his destructive power. Saturn, in the Grecian system of idolatry, was represented as devouring his children. The vultures in Bengal are highly useful in devouring the dead bodies of men and beasts, many of which are left in the roads and on the banks of rivers. It is astonishing how swiftly these birds collect wherever a dead body falls, though one of them should not have been seen in the place for weeks or months before; illustrating, in the most striking manner, the words of our Lord, "Wheresoever the carcase is, there will the vultures be gathered together." *Matt.* xxiv. 28.

in another a bow; and with the other is giving a blessing. He is said to be the son of Sōōryū by Chaya.

All the Hindoos exceedingly dread the supposed baneful influence of this god, and perform a number of ceremonies to appease him. Many stories of him are to be found in the writings of the Hindoos, such as that of his burning off the head of Gūneshū; his burning Dūshūrūt'hū's chariot in his descent from heaven; his giving rise to bad harvests, ill fortune, &c.

'If a person be born under the planet Shūnee,' says the Jyotish-tūtwū, 'he will be slandered, his riches dissipated, his son, wife, and friends destroyed; he will live at variance with others; and endure many sufferings.' The Hindoos are under constant fear of bad fortune from this planet. Some persons, if absent from home at the time of his appearance, return through fear, and others forsake their business lest they should meet with misfortunes. If one person persecute another, the latter sometimes takes it patiently, supposing it to arise from the bad fortune which naturally springs from the influence of this star. The Hindoos believe that when Shūnee is in the ninth stellar mansion, the most dreadful evils befall mankind: hence when Ramū broke the bow of Shivū, which was the condition of obtaining Sēēta in marriage, and when the earth sunk, and the waters of the seven seas were united in one, Pūrūshoo-ramū, startled at the noise of the bow, exclaimed, 'Ah! some one has laid hold of the hood of the snake, or fallen under the ninth of Shūnee.' At present, when a person is obstinate, and will not hearken to reason, a bystander says, 'I suppose he has fallen upon Shūnee, or he has laid his hand upon the hood of the snake, viz. he is embracing his own destruction.' When Ramū found that

some one had stolen Sēeta, in the midst of his rage he exclaimed, ' This person must have been born when Shūnee was in the ninth mansion.'

SECTION XXI.—*Rahoo*^b.

THIS god, the son of Singhika, is painted black: he rides on a lion; has four arms, in three of which he holds a scymitar, a spear, and a shield; and with the other hand is bestowing a blessing.

' If a person be born under the planet Rahoo,' says the work already quoted, ' his wisdom, riches, and children will be destroyed; he will be exposed to many afflictions, and be subject to his enemies.'

Rahoo was originally a giant, but at the churning of the sea he took his present name and form; (that is, he became one of the heavenly bodiesⁱ;) which transformation is thus described in the pooranūs:—At the time when the gods churned the sea to obtain the water of life, Sōōryū (the sun) and Chūndrū (the moon) were sitting together. When the nectar came up, these gods hinted to Vishnōo, that one of the company who had drank of the nectar was not a god, but one of the giants. Vishnōo immediately cut off his head; but after drinking the water of life, neither the

^b The ascending node.

ⁱ We are here reminded of Jupiter's deflowering Calisto, the daughter of Lycaon, king of Arcadia. It will be remembered, that when her disgrace became known, Juno turned her into a bear, which Jupiter afterwards advanced into heaven, and made it a constellation, now called Ursa major.

head nor the trunk could perish. The head taking the name of Rahoo, and the trunk that of Kétoo, were placed in the heavens as the ascending and descending nodes; and leave was granted, by way of revenge on Sōōryū and Chündrū, that on certain occasions Rahoo should approach these gods, and make them unclean, so that their bodies should become thin and black. The popular opinion, however, is, that, at the time of an eclipse, Rahoo swallows the sun and moon, and vomits them up again^k.

Many persons perform a number of ceremonies on these occasions, as, those to the manes; pouring out water to deceased ancestors; repeating the names of the gods; setting up gods; making offerings, &c. The Jyotish-tūtwū declares, that performing these duties now is attended with benefits infinitely greater than at other times. Nobody must discharge the fæces or urine, or eat any food, until they have seen the sun or moon after the eclipse, though it be till their rising the next day. He who does not observe this law, will have a million of hells in one.

Names. Tūmū, the dark, or, he who is possessed of a great proportion of the quality of darkness.—Rahoo, he

^k It is a most unaccountable coincidence in the notions of remote nations, that the Chinese and the Greenlanders, as well as the Hindoos, should think that the sun or the moon is devoured at the time of an eclipse. "As soon as they (the Chinese) perceive that the sun or moon begins to be darkened, they throw themselves on their knees, and knock their foreheads against the earth. A noise of drums and cymbals is immediately heard throughout the whole city. This is the remains of an ancient opinion entertained in China, that by such a horrid din they assisted the suffering luminary, and prevented it from being devoured by the celestial dragon." Crantz in his History of Greenland asserts, that a similar custom exists among this people, who could certainly never have learnt it either from the Hindoos or the Chinese,

who swallows and afterwards vomits up the sun or moon.—Swürbhanoo, he who shines in the heavens.—Soinghikéyü, the son of Singhika.—Vidhoontoodü, he who afflicts the moon.

SECTION XXII.—*Kétoo*¹.

KETOO is the headless trunk of Rahoo, which became immortal at the churning of the sea. This god is painted of a light green colour. He rides on a vulture; in one hand holds a club, and with the other is bestowing a blessing.

THE preceding may be called the Hindoo CELESTIAL GODS. I dare not say, that I have given every deity of this order, as I have not found any book containing an exact list of them. I could easily have enlarged the number, by inserting accounts of other forms of these gods; but this would have swelled the work, without adding to its value,

¹ The descending node,

CHAP. III.

OF THE GODDESSES.

SECT. I.—*Doorga*.

IN those parts of the Hindoo shastrs which treat of the production of the world, this goddess is spoken of as the female power, under the name of Prkritē or Bhūvūtē. She was first born in the house of Dukṣhū, one of the progenitors of mankind, and called Sūtē; under which name she was married to Shivū, but renounced her life on hearing her father reproach her husband. On her second appearance, we recognize her under the name of Parvūtē, the daughter of Himalūyā^a; when she was again married to Shivū, by whom she had two children, Kartikéyū and Gūnēshū.

Doorga has had many births to destroy the giants^b. The reason of her being called Doorga is thus given in the Kashē-khūndū:—On a certain occasion Ūgūstyū, the sage, asked Kartikéyū, why Parvūtē, his mother, was called Doorga. Kartikéyū replied, that formerly a giant named Doorgū, the son of Rooroo, having performed religious austerities in honour of Brūmha, obtained his blessing, and became a great oppressor: he conquered the three worlds, and dethroned Indrū, Vayoo, Chūndrū, Yūmū, Ūgneē, Vū-roonū, Koovérū, Būlee, Eēshanū, Roodrū, Sōōryū, the eight Vūsoos, &c. The wives of the rishees were compelled to

^a The mountain of this name.

^b Sir W. Jones, not improperly, considers Doorga as bearing a pretty strong resemblance to Juno, as well as to Minerva.

celebrate his praises. He sent all the gods from their heavens to live in forests; and at his nod they came and worshipped him. He abolished all religious ceremonies; the bramhūns, through fear of him, forsook the reading of the védūs; the rivers changed their courses; fire lost its energy; and the terrified stars retired from sight: he assumed the forms of the clouds, and gave rain whenever he pleased; the earth through fear gave an abundant increase; and the trees yielded flowers and fruits out of season. The gods at length applied to Shivū. Indrū said, 'He has dethroned me;'—Sōōryū said, 'He has taken my kingdom:' and thus all the gods related their misfortunes. Shivū, pitying their case, desired Parvūtēē to go and destroy the giant. She willingly accepting of the commission, calmed the fears of the gods, and first sent Kalū-ratree, a female whose beauty bewitched the inhabitants of the three worlds, to order the giant to restore things to their ancient order. The latter, full of fury, sent some soldiers to lay hold of Kalū-ratree; but, by the breath of her mouth, she reduced them to ashes. Doorgū then sent 30,000 other giants, who were such monsters in size that they covered the surface of the earth. Among them were the following: Doordhūrū^c, Doormookhū^d, Khūrū^e, Shirū-panee^f, Pashū-panee^g, Sooréndrū^h, Dūmūnūⁱ, Hūnook^k, Yūgnūhaneē^l, Khūrgū-roma^m, Oograsyūⁿ, Dēvū-kūmpūnū^o, &c. At the sight of these giants, Kalū-ratree fled through the air to Parvūtēē, and the giants followed her. Doorgū, with 100,000,000 chariots, 200 ūrvoodūs (or 120,000,000,000) of elephants, 10,000,000 of swift-footed horses, and innu-

^c Difficult to catch. ^d Foul-mouthed. ^e Cruel. ^f Holding a human skull in the hand. ^g Wielders of the pashū. ^h Sovereigns of the gods. ⁱ Bullies. ^k Of high cheek bones. ^l Sacrifice-destroyers. ^m They whose hair is like scymitars. ⁿ Of terrific countenance. ^o They who make the gods tremble.

merable soldiers, went to fight with Parvātēē on the mountain Vindhū. As soon as the giant drew near, Parvātēē assumed 1000 arms, and called to her a sistance different kinds of beings, as jūmbhū^p, mūhajūmbhū^q, vijūmbhū^r, vikū'anūnū^s, pingakshū^t, mūhishū^u, mūhogrū^x, ūtyoogrū^y, vigrūhū^z, krōorakshū^a, krodhūnū^b, krāndānū^c, sūnkrāndānū^d, mūha-bhūyū^e, jitantūkū^f, mūha-vahoo^g, mūha-vūktrū^h, mūhēēdhūrūⁱ, doondoobhū^k, doondoobhirūvū^l, mūha-doondoo-bhinasikū^m, oograsyūⁿ, dēērgū-dushūnū^o, méghū-késhū^p, vrikanūnū^q, singhasyū^r, shōōkurū-mookhū^s, shiva-rūvū-mūhotkūtū^t, shookūt-oondū^u, prāchūndasyū^x, bhēēmakshū^y, kshoodrū-manūsū^z, oolōōkū-nétrū^a, kūnūkasyū^b, kakūtoondū^c, khūrūnūkhū^d, dēērgū-grēēvū^e, mūhajūnghū^f, shiroddhūrū^g, rūktū-vrindū-jūvanétrū^h, vidyootjivhūⁱ, ūgninétrūkū^k, tapūnū^l, dhōōmrakshū^m, dhoomūnishwasūⁿ, shoorū-chūndangshoo-tapūnū^o, mūhabhēēshūnū-mookhū^p, &c. She also brought a number of weapons out of her body, as ūsee^q, chūkrū^r, bhooshoon-dēē^s, gūda^t, moodgūrū^u, tomārū^x, bhindipalū^y, pūrigū^z,

- ^p Malicious. ^q Very malicious. ^r In various ways malicious.
^s Of fear-exciting countenance. ^t Of yellow eyes. ^u Like buffaloes.
^x Wrathful. ^y Exceedingly wrathful. ^z Warriors. ^a Cruel-eyed.
^b Wrathful. ^c Causers of crying. ^d Causing to cry excessively.
^e Fear-exciting. ^f Death-conquering. ^g Large-armed. ^h Large-faced.
ⁱ Mountain-like. ^k Noisy like the doondoobhee. ^l Ditto.
^m With noses like the doondoobhee. ⁿ With wrathful countenance.
^o Long-toothed. ^p With hair like clouds. ^q Leopard-faced.
^r Lion-faced. ^s Pig-faced. ^t Exciting terrors by making sounds like the jackal.
^u With bills like a parrot. ^x Terrible-faced.
^y Terrific-eyed. ^z Little-minded. ^a Owl-eyed. ^b Gold-faced.
^c Crow-faced. ^d Sharp-nailed. ^e Long-necked. ^f Long-thighed.
^g Large-veined. ^h With eyes red like the yūva flower. ⁱ With tongues like ligh'ning.
^k Fiery-eyed. ^l Inflamers. ^m Smoke-eyed.
ⁿ With breath like smoke. ^o Giving pain to the sun and moon. ^p Of horrid countenance.
^q A scymitar. ^r A discus. ^s A hatchet.
^t A bludgeon or club. ^u A hammer. ^x An iron crow. ^y A short arrow. ^z A bludgeon.

koontū^a, shūlyū^b, shūktee^c, ūrdhū-chūndrū^d, kshoorūprū^e, narachū^f, shilēemookhū^g, mūhabhūllū^h, pūrūshooⁱ, bhidoorū^k, and mūrmūbhédū^l. The troops of the giant poured their arrows on Parvūtēē, sitting on the mountain Vindhū, thick as the drops of rain in a storm; they even tore up the trees, the mountains, &c. and hurled at the goddess; who however threw a weapon which carried away many of the arms of the giant: when he, in return, hurled a flaming dart at the goddess; which she turning aside, he discharged another; but this also she resisted by a hundred arrows. He next let fly an arrow at Parvūtēē's breast; but this too she repelled, as well as two other instruments, a club and a pike. At last Parvūtēē seized Doorgū, and set her left foot on his breast; but he disengaged himself, and renewed the fight. The beings (9,000,000) whom Parvūtēē caused to issue from her body then destroyed all the soldiers of the giant; in return Doorgū caused a dreadful shower of hail to descend, the effect of which Parvūtēē counteracted by an instrument called shoshūnū^m. He next, breaking off the peak of a mountain, threw it at Parvūtēē, who cut it into seven pieces by her arrows. The giant now assumed the shape of an elephant as large as a mountain, and approached the goddess; but she tied his legs, and with her nails, which were like scymitars, tore him to pieces. He then arose in the form of a buffalo, and with his horns cast stones, trees, and mountains at the goddess, tearing up the trees by the breath of his nostrils. The goddess next pierced him with her trident, when he reeled to and fro, and, renouncing the form of the buffalo, assumed his ori-

^a A bearded dart. ^b A javelin. ^c Another. ^d An arrow like a half-moon. ^e A weapon like a spade. ^f A small arrow. ^g A round arrow. ^h A very long spear. ⁱ A hatchet like a half-moon. ^k A thunderbolt full of spikes. ^l A bearded arrow. ^m A weapon which dries up liquids.

ginal body as a giant, with a thousand arms, and weapons in each. Going up to Parvūtēē, the goddess seized him by his thousand arms, and carried him into the air, from whence she threw him down with dreadful force. Perceiving however that this had no effect, she pierced him in the breast with an arrow; when the blood issued in streams from his mouth, and he expired. The gods were now filled with joy: Sōōryū, Chūndrū, Ūgnee, &c. obtained their former splendour; and all the other deities, who had been dethroned by this giant, immediately reascended their thrones; the bramhūns resumed the study of the védūs; sacrifices were regularly performed, and every thing assumed its pristine state: the heavens rang with the praises of Parvūtēē, and the gods, in return for so signal a deliverance, honoured her with the name of Doorga.

Mūhishū, king of the giants, at a certain period overcame the gods in war, and reduced them to such a state of indigence, that they were seen wandering about the earth like common beggars. Indrū, after a time, collected them together, and they went in a body to Brūmha, and afterwards to Shivū, but met with no redress. At last they applied to Vishnū, who was so enraged at beholding their wretchedness, that streams of glory issued from his face, from which sprang a female named Mūha-maya (Doorga). Streams of glory issued also from the faces of the other gods, and entering Mūha-maya, she became a body of glory resembling a mountain on fire. The gods then gave their weapons to this female, and, with a frightful scream, she ascended into the air.

[The work Chūndēē, in this place, contains a long account of the dreadful contest betwixt Mūha-maya and this giant, which ended in the destruction of the latter.]

After the victory the gods chanted the praises of Mūhama; and the goddess, pleased with their gratitude, promised to succour them whenever they were in distress, and then disappeared.

The Hindoos believe that the worship of Doorga has been performed through the four yoogūs; but that Soorūtū, a king, in the end of the dwapūrū-yoogū, made known the present form of worshipping the goddess, and celebrated these orgies in the month Choitrū; (hence called the Vāsūntee, or spring festival.) Soorūtū offered a very great number of goats, sheep, and buffaloes to Doorga; believing, according to the shastrū, that he should enjoy happiness in heaven as many years as there were hairs upon the different animals offered. After his death, however, his case excited much discussion in the court of Yūmū; who at length decided, that though Soorūtū had much merit, he had destroyed the lives of many animals, and that he must be born and suffer death from all these beasts assembled in one place, when he should immediately be advanced to heaven. Others interpret this passage of the shastrū as meaning, that the king was to assume in succession the forms of all these beasts, and be put to death in each form before he could ascend to heaven. In the trētū-yoogū Ramū is said to have performed the worship of Doorga in the month Ashwinū; and from him it is continued in this month, and called the Sharū-dēya, or autumnal festival.

This festival, celebrated in the month Ashwinū, the most popular of all the annual festivals held in Bengal, I shall now attempt to describe. Immense sums are expended upon itⁿ; all business throughout the country is

* In the city of Calcutta alone, it is supposed, upon a moderate calcu-

laid aside for several days, and universal festivity and licentiousness prevail. A short time before the festival, the learned men and sirkars^o employed in Calcutta almost universally return home; some of them enjoy a holiday of several weeks.

The image of Doorga has ten arms. In one of her right hands is a spear, with which she is piercing the giant Mūhishū; with one of the left she holds the tail of a serpent, and the hair of the giant, whose breast the serpent is biting. Her other hands are all stretched behind her head, and filled with different instruments of war. Against her right leg leans a lion, and against her left the above giant.—The images of Lākshmī, Sūrūswatī, Kartikēyū, and Gānēshū, are very frequently made and placed by the side of this goddess.

On the 9th day of the decrease of the moon this festival begins, when the ceremony called sūnkūlpū s performed, by the officiating bramhūn's taking into his joined hands a metal kosha, (which contains water, flowers, fruits, sesamum, rice, and a blade of kooshū grass,) reading an incantation, and promising that on the succeeding days such a person will perform the worship of Doorga. After this, Doorga is worshipped before a pan of water with the accustomed formularies.

On the 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, and 15th days of

lation, that half a million sterling is expended annually on this festival. About fifty years ago (1811) Kūndūrpū-goorū, a kaist'hū, expended in this worship 38,000 pounds, and spent 12,500 pounds annually as long as he lived in the same manner.

^o Natives who direct the business of Europeans are commonly called sirkars. The proper name is Mootsūddee, or Moolhūree.

the moon, the same ceremonies are performed before the pan of water; and, with some trifling variations in the offerings, continued on the 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th.

On the 21st day of the moon, at the close of the worship, what is called *ūdhiyasū* is performed. This also is a preliminary ceremony, and consists in taking rice, fruits, &c. and touching with them a pan of water, and afterwards the forehead of the image, at intervals repeating incantations.

On the 22d, early in the morning, the officiating *bramhūn* consecrates the image, placing it on the spot prepared for it in the temple, and repeating the proper formulas. After this the principal ceremonies before the image begin. First, the business of giving eyes and life to the images is performed; when they become objects of worship. In this curious ceremony, the officiating *bramhūn* touches with the two fore-fingers of his right hand the breast, the two cheeks, the eyes, and the forehead of the image. When he touches these places he says, 'Let the soul of Doorga long continue in happiness in this image.' After this, he takes a leaf of the *vilwū* tree, rubs it with clarified butter, and holds it over a burning lamp till it be covered with soot; of which he takes a little on the stalk of another *vilwū* leaf, and touches the eyes, filling up with the soot a small white place left in the pupil of the eye.

The worship of *Gūneshū* and other gods is now performed; then that of the demi-goddesses, the companions of Doorga in her wars, who are represented by the dots of paint on the canopy which covers the image of the goddess. The offerings presented to them consist of very small slices of plantains, on each of which are stuck two or three grains of rice, &c. Then follows the worship of the other images

set up with that of Doorga; to which succeeds the principal worship, that of Doorga. First, the officiating bramhūn performs dhyānū; in which, sitting before the image, he closes his eyes, and repeats the proper formulas, meditating on the form of the goddess, and repeating to himself, 'I present to the goddess all these flowers, fruits, &c. [here he goes over all the offerings;] I slay all these animals,' &c. He then calls the goddess, saying, 'O goddess, come here, come here; stay here, stay here. Take up thine abode here, and receive my worship.' The priest next places before the image a small piece of square gold or silver, for the goddess to sit upon, and asks if she has arrived happily; adding the answer himself, 'Very happily.' After this water for washing the feet is offered, by taking it with a spoon from one vessel, and pouring it out into another, while the incantation is repeated. Ten or fifteen blades of dōōrvū grass, a yūva flower, sandal powder, rice, &c. are then offered with an incantation, and laid at the feet of Doorga. Next follows water to wash the mouth; curds, sugar, and a lighted lamp. Then water to wash the mouth, and to bathe; then a cloth, or garments; then jewels, or ornaments for the feet, arms, fingers, nose, ears, &c. with sandal wood, and red or white lead; then flowers of different kinds, one at a time, with a separate incantation for each flower; also a vilwū leaf, with some powder of sandal wood put upon it. Then are offered thrice successively two handfuls of flowers of different kinds; afterwards incense, a lighted lamp, and meat offerings. At the close, the bramhūn walks round the image seven times, repeating forms of petition and praise.

Now the bloody sacrifices are offered. If the animal be a sheep or a goat, as is always the case on the first day, the officiating bramhūn, after bathing it either in the river or

in the house, puts his left hand on its forehead, marks its horns and forehead with red lead, and reads an incantation, in which he offers it up to the goddess thus: 'O goddess, I sacrifice this goat^p to thee, that I may live in thy heaven to the end of ten years.' He then reads an incantation in its ear, and puts flowers, and sprinkles water, on its head. The instrument with which the animal is killed is consecrated by placing upon it flowers, red lead, &c. and writing on it the incantation which is given to the disciples of Doorga. The officiating bramhūn next puts the instrument of death on the neck of the animal, and, after presenting him with a flower as a blessing^q, then into the hand of the person appointed to slay the animal, who is generally the blacksmith^r, but sometimes a bramhūn. The assistants put the goat's neck into an upright post, excavated at the top so as to admit the neck betwixt its two sides; the body remaining on one side of the post, and the head on the other. An earthen vessel containing a plantain is placed upon a plantain leaf; after which the blacksmith cuts off the head at one blow, and another person holds up the body, and drains out the blood upon the plantain in the bason. If the person who performs the sacrifice does not intend to offer the flesh to Doorga^s, the slayer cuts only a small morsel from the neck, and puts it on the plantain; when some one carries it,

^p Only male animals are offered.

^q It is common among the Hindoos for a superior to give a blessing while presenting a flower.

^r The Hindoos covet the honour of cutting off the head of an animal dexterously at the time of these sacrifices. If it be not done at one blow, they drive the blacksmith away in disgrace. The shastris have denounced vengeance on the person who shall fail to cut off the head at one blow: his son will die, or the goddess of fortune (Lūkshmēē) will forsake him.

^s This is rarely or never done at present. There are no parts of the animal, however, which may not be offered.

and the head, and places them before the image, putting on the head a lighted lamp. After all the animals have been thus killed, and some of the flesh and the heads carried before the image, the officiating bramhūn repeats certain prayers over these offerings, and presents them to the goddess, with the blood which fell on the plantains: then, taking the blood from the bason, he puts it on a plantain leaf, and cuts it into four parts, presenting it to the four goddesses who attend upon Doorga.

Offerings of rice, plantains, sugar, sweetmeats, sour milk, curds, pulse of different sorts, limes, fruits, &c. are next presented with prayers. Now the names of Doorga are repeated by the priest, who afterwards presents camphorated water to the goddess; then betle-nut, limes, spices, &c. made into what is called panū^t. After repeating a number of forms of praise, this part of the service closes with the prostration of the officiating bramhūn before the idol. Next, food is presented with many prayers to the goddess; which food consists of what is called khéchūrū^u, fried fruits, fried fish and flesh, &c. About four in the afternoon, large quantities of food are presented to the goddess; amongst which are, prepared greens of three or four kinds; prepared peas of three or four kinds; fried fruits, sweet potatoes, &c.; fried fish, mixed with fruits of four or five different sorts; the flesh of sheep and goats, stewed in two or three ways; preparations of tamarinds, two or three sorts; rice boiled in milk, two or three sorts; fifteen or sixteen sorts of sweetmeats, &c.; all which are offered with separate prayers: after which water, betle, &c. are presented.

^t Chewed by almost all the natives.

^u A common dish in Bengal, made of rice, boiled up with turmeric, pease, spices, clarified butter, &c.

The bramhūns are entertained either with sweetmeats, or prepared food, by the person at whose house the worship is performed: some of them are expressly invited, and others attend to see the ceremonies. The food which has been presented to the goddess, being considered almost as ambrosia, is given to the guests with a sparing hand; some of whom (mothers) beg to take a morsel home to cure their children, or relatives, of diseases. Food is also sent to the neighbours, and persons of inferior cast carry away great quantities^{*}.

In the evening the officiating bramhūn waves a brass candlestick, or lamp with five lights, before the goddess, repeating incantations; afterwards a shell with water in it, and then a piece of cloth. At night the temple is lighted up, and, about eight o'clock, unleavened bread, butter, fruits, sweetmeats, curds, milk, &c. are presented to the goddess. At midnight some persons repeat the worship; but in this case the offerings are few, and there are no bloody sacrifices.

After the worship of the day, many rich men engage a number of prostitutes, richly dressed and almost covered with ornaments, to dance and sing before the idol. The songs are exceedingly obscene; the dances highly indecent; and the dress of the dancing women no less so; their clothing being so fine as scarcely to deserve the name of a covering. The tresses of some are thrown loose, hanging down to the waist. During the dances, the doors are shut

^{*} In some places a family or several families of bramhūns are supported by the revenues attached to a temple, and by the offerings presented to the idol. At the time of a festival the heads of these families wait on those who come to make offerings to the idol, and present them with betle, sweetmeats, fruits, water, &c. according to their quality.

to keep out the crowd, as well as Europeans, who are carefully excluded. Six, seven, or eight women thus dance together, assisted by music, for about four hours. Rich spectators, when remarkably pleased with a part of the song, throw to the singer as much as four, eight, or sixteen roopees; beside which, those who engage these women make them presents of garments, and of considerable sums of money. The sons of the rich natives are highly pleased with these dances.

On the second day, the worship and sacrifices are much the same as on the first, except that the bathing of the goddess, called the great *snanū*, is attended with more ceremonies. In this ceremony the priest first brings some earth said to have been thrown up by the teeth of a wild hog, and, mixing it with water, presents it with prayers to the goddess, to be used as soap. Then in succession earth from before the door of the king, or lord of the soil; from before that of a courtesan; from the side of the Ganges; earth raised by ants; and, lastly, earth from any river side, not the Ganges, is presented with the same ceremonies. After this, turmeric, fruits, and spices; the water of the cocoa-nut, and of the water melon; the juice of the sugar cane; honey, clarified butter, sour milk, milk, cow's urine, cow-dung, sugar, treacle, and different sorts of oil, are presented in succession, with the necessary formulas. While the officiating *bramhūn* is going through these ceremonies, he revolves in his mind that he is making these gifts to assist the goddess in bathing. At the close, he presents some water of the Ganges, and after this the water of four seas; or, if unable to obtain this, the water of the Ganges again, and then the water of some other river. The bathing ceremonies are closed by a present of cloth for the loins. In the evening, or else in the night, according

to the conjunction of the stars, worship is again performed, in which only one bloody sacrifice is offered; and in some cases none. Widows fast on this day, particularly a widow with children; the latter deriving great benefits from the meritorious actions of the mother.

On the third day, the goddess is worshipped only once, but the offerings and sacrifices are many; buffaloes are offered only on this day. A respectable native once told me, he had seen one hundred and eight buffaloes sacrificed by one Hindoo at this festival: the number slain in the whole country must therefore be very great. Formerly some of the Hindoo kings killed a thousand animals on these occasions^y. The males only are sacrificed; and they are in general young and very tame, costing from five to sixteen roopees each. None of the Hindoos eat the sacrificed buffaloes, except the shoemakers^z. Each animal is bathed before it is slain; after which the officiating bramhūn puts red lead on its horns, and, with a red string, ties a piece of wool smeared with red lead on the forepart of the

^y The father of the present king of Nūdēya, at one of these festivals, offered a great number of goats and sheep to Doorga. He began with one, and, doubling the number each day, continued it for sixteen days. On the last day he killed 33,768, and in the whole he slaughtered 65,535 animals. He loaded boats with the bodies, and sent them to the neighbouring bramhūns; but they could not devour them fast enough, and great numbers were thrown away.—Let no one, after this, tell us of the scruples of the bramhūns about destroying animal life, and eating animal food.

^z In some places the tame hog is offered to Doorga by the lowest casts, who, among other offerings, present spirituous liquors to the goddess. At the end of the ceremonies, these persons cook and eat the flesh, drink the spirits, and then, in a state of intoxication, the men and women dance together, and commit the greatest indecencies. No bramhūn, on pain of losing cast, can assist at these ceremonies; and indeed all bramhūns, who perform ceremonies for persons of low cast, sink in society.

breast; he also puts a piece of cloth coloured over with turmeric on his back, and a necklace of vilwū leaves on his neck, repeating prayers during these actions. The ceremony of cutting off the heads of the buffaloes, and presenting them to the goddess, is similar to those already described respecting the sacrifice of goats and sheep.

After the beasts are all slain, the multitude, rich and poor, daub their bodies all over with the mud formed with the blood which has collected where the animals were slain, and dance like furies on the spot; after which they go into the street, dancing and singing indecent songs, and visit those houses where images of the goddess have been set up.

At the close of the whole, the officiating bramhūn presents a burnt-offering, and gives to the goddess a sum of money, commonly about four roopees: some indeed give one hundred, and others as much as a thousand roopees; which at length return into the hands of the officiating bramhūn.

In the year 1806, I was present at the worship of this goddess, as performed at the house of Raja Raj-Krishnū at Calcutta. The buildings where the festival was held were on four sides, leaving an area in the middle. The room to the east contained wine, English sweetmeats, &c. for the entertainment of English guests, with a native Portuguese or two to wait on the visitors. In the opposite room was placed the image, with vast heaps of all kinds of offerings before it. In the two side rooms were the native guests, and in the area groups of Hindoo dancing women, finely dressed, singing, and dancing with sleepy steps, surrounded with Europeans who were sitting on chairs and couches. One or two groups of Mūsūlman men-singers entertained

the company at intervals with Hindoost'hanee songs, and ludicrous tricks. Before two o'clock the place was cleared of the dancing girls, and of all the Europeans except ourselves; and almost all the lights were extinguished, except in front of the goddess;—when the doors of the area were thrown open, and a vast crowd of natives rushed in, almost treading one upon another; among whom were the vocal singers, having on long caps like sugar loaves. The area might be about fifty cubits long and thirty wide. When the crowd had sat down, they were so wedged together as to present the appearance of a solid pavement of heads; a small space only being left immediately before the image for the motions of the singers, who all stood up. Four sets of singers were present on this occasion, the first consisting of bramhūns, the next of bankers, the next of voishnūvūs, and the last of weavers^a; who entertained their guests with filthy songs, and danced in indecent attitudes before the goddess, holding up their hands, turning round, putting forward their heads towards the image, every now and then bending their bodies, and almost tearing their throats with their vociferations. The whole scene produced on my mind sensations of the greatest horror. The dress of the singers—their indecent gestures—the abominable nature of the songs—the horrid din of their miserable drum—the lateness of the hour—the darkness of the place—with the reflection that I was standing in an idol temple, and that this immense multitude of rational and immortal creatures, capable of superior joys, were, in the very act of worship, perpetrating a crime of high treason against the God of heaven, while they themselves believed they were performing an act of merit—

^a Distinguished among the natives by the name of Hūroo-t'hakoorū, Bhūvanūdū, Nitae, and Lūkshmē.

excited ideas and feelings in my mind which time can never obliterate.

I would have given, in this place, a specimen of the songs sung before the image, but found them so full of broad obscenity that I could not copy a single line. All those actions, which a sense of decency keeps out of the most indecent English songs, are here detailed, sung, and laughed at, without the least sense of shame. A poor ballad-singer in England would be sent to the house of correction, and flogged, for performing the *meritorious actions* of these wretched idolaters^b. The singing is continued for three days, from about two o'clock in the morning till nine.

The next morning, between eight and nine, a short time is spent in worship, but no bloody sacrifices are offered. Amongst other ceremonies at this time the officiating bramhūn, in the presence of the family, dismisses the goddess, repeating these words: 'O goddess! I have, to the best of my ability, worshipped thee. Now go to thy residence, leaving this blessing, that thou wilt return the next year:' after which the priest immerses a looking-glass, the representative of the goddess, in a pan of water; and then takes some of this water, and sprinkles himself and the company with it. When the goddess is thus dismissed, the women set up a cry—some even shed tears. In the afternoon the mistress of the house and other women go to the image, put a roopee and some betle in its hand, strew some turmeric at its feet, and rub the dust of its feet on their own foreheads and those of their friends. On their retiring, the

^b The reader will recollect that the festivals of Bacchus and Cybele were equally noted for the indecencies practised by the worshippers, both in their words and actions.

crowd assemble, with their bodies daubed with turmeric, oil, and sour milk; and, bringing out the image, place it on a stage, to which they fasten it with cords, and carry it on their shoulders to the water. It is here placed in the centre of two boats lashed together, and filled with people, among whom are dancers, musicians, singers, &c. At this time, in many instances, men dance stark naked on the boat before many thousands assembled, who only laugh at this gross indecency. Perhaps in one place on the river twenty or thirty images will be exhibited at once, while the banks are crowded with spectators rich and poor, old and young, all intoxicated with the scene^c. The last ceremony is that of letting down the image, with all its tinsel and ornaments, into the river.

The women of the house to which the temple belongs go to the room from whence the goddess has just been taken, and place a pan of water upon the spot where the image stood, and put upon the top of the pan a branch of the mango tree. After the goddess has been drowned, the crowd return to the temple; and the officiating bramhūn, taking his place by the side of the pan of water, dips the

^c In a memorandum of my own, dated Sept. 26, 1803, I find these remarks, made one evening in the course of a journey:—‘About five in the afternoon we came to Būlargūr. The people of about twenty villages, more than 2000 in number, including women and children, were assembled to throw their images into the river, this being the termination of the Doorga festival. I observed that one of the men standing before the idol in a boat, dancing and making indecent gestures, was naked. As the boat passed along, he was gazed at by the mob; nor could I perceive that this abominable action produced any thing beside laughter. Before other images young men, dressed in women’s clothes, were dancing with other men, making indecent gestures. I cannot help thinking the most vulgar mob in England would have turned with disgust from these abominable scenes. I have seen the same abominations exhibited before our own house at Serampore.’

branch of the mango tree into the water, and sprinkles all the people, repeating incantations; and thus blessing the people they are dismissed, when each one clasps his neighbour in his arms. Adjourning to their own houses, they partake of sweetmeats, and of an intoxicating beverage made with hemp leaves. In a vast number of instances this festival is thus closed with scenes of the most shameful intoxication: almost all the Hindoos in Bengal think it duty to indulge to a certain degree in drinking this liquor at this festival.

Presents to the bramhūns and their wives are made on each of the fifteen days of the festival by the person at whose house the image is set up, if he be very rich. If he be not rich enough to bear so great an expense, he gives presents on the nine or three last days of worship; and if he be still poorer, on the last day. These presents consist of gold and silver female ornaments, silk and cloth garments, brass and other metal dishes, basons, &c. Some persons expend the greatest sums on the dances and other exhibitions, and others in feasting and giving presents to bramhūns.

Some classes of Hindoos, especially those who are the disciples of Vishnōo, do not offer bloody sacrifices to Door-ga, though they celebrate this festival with much shew. These persons, instead of slaying animals, cut pumpkins in two, or some other substitute, and offer them to the goddess.

In the month Choitrū a number of Hindoos hold a festival to this goddess, after the example of king Soorūtū.

Many Hindoos are initiated into the rites by which this

goddess becomes their guardian deity; and as she is considered as the image of the divine energy, her disciples are called Shaktüs; a word signifying energy.

Images of Doorga, made of gold, silver, brass, &c. are preserved by many, and worshipped daily.

In the year 1808, a bramhün of Calcutta, who had celebrated the worship of Doorga, pretended that he had seen the goddess in a dream; who had declared that she would not descend into the river till he had sacrificed his eldest son to her: and that when the people went to convey the image to the river, it was found so heavy that it could not be lifted. Vast crowds of people flocked to see this new miracle, many of whom made offerings to this terror-inspiring goddess; and others assisted the poor man, by their contributions, to pacify the goddess in some way consistent with the preservation of his son.

One of the Tüntrüs contains an account of an incarnation of Doorga in the form of a jackal, in order to carry the child Krishnũ over the river Yũmoono, when he was flying from king Kũngsũ. Some of the heterodox Hindoos, called vamacharēēs, feed the jackal daily, by placing the offerings in a corner of the house, or near their dwellings, and then calling the goddess (in the form of some one of these animals) to come and partake of them. As this is done at the hour when the jackals come out of their lurking places to seek for food, one of these animals sometimes comes and eats the offerings in the presence of the worshipper; and this is not wonderful, when he finds food in this place every day. Images of the jackal are made in some parts of Bengal, and worshipped, sometimes alone, and at others with the images of Doorga and Shmũshanũ-Kalēē. Some Hindoos bow to

the jackal; if it pass by a person on his left, it is a fortunate omen.

The cow is regarded by the Hindoos as a form of Doorga, and called Bhūgūvūtēē.

This goddess has a thousand names, among which are Katyayūnēē, or, the daughter of the sage Katyū.—Gourēē, the yellow coloured.—Kalēē, the black.—Hoimūvūtēē, the daughter of Himalūyū.—Eēshwūrēē, the goddess.—Shiva, the giver of good.—Bhūvanēē, the wife of Shivū.—Sūrvū-mūngūla, she who blesses all.—Ūpūrna, she who amidst religious austerities abstained from eating even leaves.—Parvūtēē, the daughter of the mountain.—Doorga, she who destroyed the giant Doorgū; the inaccessible.—Chūdika, the terrible.—Ūmbika, the mother of the universe.

SECT. II.—*The ten Forms of Doorga.*

THIS goddess is said to have assumed ten different forms in order to destroy two giants, Shoombhū and Nishoombhū.

The following account of these wars is translated from the Markūdēyū pooranū:—At the close of the tréta yoogū, these two giants performed religious austerities for 10,000 years; the merit of which actions brought Shivū from heaven*, who discovered that by these works of extraordinary devotion they sought to obtain the blessing of immortality. Shivū reasoned long with them, and endeavoured

* It is a maxim of the Hindoo religion, that by performing religious austerities the gods become subject to the wishes of men.